

THE NICKEL COMMISSION

The Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines of Ontario has announced the appointment of a commission to undertake an investigation of the nickel industry. The intention to appoint such a commission was made public some months ago; but there was considerable delay in selecting the chairman, and consequently in announcing the names of the other members.

Obviously the best mining men in Ontario to undertake such an investigation for the Ontario Government are the officials of the Bureau of Mines. The Bureau already has information which it would take an outsider many months to collect, and in Mr. T. W. Gibson and Dr. W. G. Miller the Bureau has two most competent authorities. The Commission will be well posted as to local conditions.

Mr. George T. Holloway, who has been selected chairman of the Commission, is not well known here, but comes highly recommended by British authorities. He has been in practice as a consulting metallurgist and assayer since 1886 and has a fund of technical knowledge which should stand him in good stead in the investigation of the nickel industry.

The naming of Mr. McGregor Young as a member of the Commission indicates that political and legal aspects of the inquiry are expected to assume considerable importance. Mr. Young is professor of constitutional law and international law at the University of Toronto.

It is understood that the B. C. Copper Company will immediately start No. 1 furnace at Greenwood. The smelting plant is operated successfully on very low grade ore and might have been making a good profit during the past few months. It was closed down last fall when the low price of copper made operations unprofitable.

The production of nickel and copper in the Sudbury districts is now far above normal. At the mines and smelters many improvements have been made and efficiency has increased with the production.

Recently elected boards of directors of mining companies controlled by Calumet & Hecla Mining Company show many new names. The boards of subsidiary companies were formerly largely made up of directors of the controlling company. The interlocking directorates are now disappearing.

Mr. H. C. Hoover, who is directing the work of the American Commission for Relief in Belgium, is achieving great things in the German-ridden country. Mining engineers are proud to belong to the same profession as Mr. Hoover.

In a paper to be presented at the San Francisco meeting of the American Institute of Mining Engineers, Mr. Nathaniel Herz, of Lead, S.D., gives a record of obser-

vations made while testing a large variety of zinc-dust samples. He concludes that for precipitation of precious metals the zinc-dust should be fine; "most of it should pass through a 200-mesh screen and the fine portion should be very much finer than the screen opening."

The Geological Survey has issued a report by Mr. C. L. Cumming on "The Artesian Wells of Montreal." An interesting feature of the report is the conclusion that the waters can be classified areally, but not according to depth. The author of the report is able to map out areas distinguished by a high content of calcium chloride, calcium sulphate and sodium, respectively.

Copper and spelter are now selling at about the same price—19 to 19½ cents a pound. The demand recently has not been as good as it was a month ago; but many authorities believe that good prices will continue. The chief present concern of owners of copper and zinc mines is how to increase the capacity of their plants, to take advantage of the good market.

The report of Mr. Theo. C. Denis, Superintendent of Mines, of Quebec, on mining operations in Quebec during 1914, has been published. The statistics compiled by the Quebec Mines Branch show that the mineral production of the Province during the year ending December 31st, 1914, reached a total value of \$11,732,783. As compared with the previous year, when a value of \$13,119,811 was recorded, this is a decrease of \$1,387,028, or of 10.57 per cent. Owing to the very abnormal conditions which marked the whole second half of the year 1914, it is a matter of gratification that the figures have not shown a greater falling off. As it is, the total mineral production is greater than that recorded for 1912, when it was \$11,187,110. The revised figures of the mineral production of the Province of Quebec during the year 1914, were preceded by a preliminary statistical statement, which was issued on February 23rd, 1915, and appeared in the "Journal" March 1. These preliminary statistics, which were published subject to revision, gave a close approximation, at an early date, of the production of the various mineral substances during the year. In fact, the total given in this early statement only differed by \$407,355, or 3.47 per cent., from the finally revised figures.

DOMES MINES.

The following statement, which lacks official confirmation, has appeared in several Eastern papers:

Recent development work of Dome Mines Co. has added 375,000 tons of high grade ore to the company's ore reserves. Estimated value of this ore is \$5,625,000 on conservative basis of \$15 a ton, although much of it runs \$19 and \$21.43 a ton. At the close of the last fiscal year on March 31, the company's ore reserves were valued at \$11,576,857, so that additional ore blocked out in barely more than three months since, brings value of ore reserves to \$17,201,859. Further development work is expected to add greatly to reserves of high grade ore.